

L O U I S A,

A

P O E T I C A L N O V E L,

I N

F O U R E P I S T L E S.

B Y M I S S S E W A R D.

T H E F O U R T H E D I T I O N.

L I C H F I E L D:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. JACKSON, AND G. ROBINSON,
IN PATER-NOSTER-ROW, LONDON,
MDCCLXXXIV.



P R E F A C E.

TH E ensuing epistolary poems contain a description rather of passions than of incidents. They resulted from an idea of it being possible to unite the impassion'd fondness of POPE'S ELOISA, with the chaster tenderness of PRIOR'S EMMA; avoiding the voluptuousness of the first, and the too conceding softness of the second. It is hoped the Reader will distinguish between the apprehended possibility of exhibiting in verse a more faultless female Character than the ELOISA of POPE, or the EMMA of PRIOR, and the rash and vain design of equalling, much less of surpassing the transcendent poetic excellence of either of those Compositions.

THE LOUISA of the following pages has all that enthusiasm which springs from an heart warmly affectionate, joined to a glowing and picturesque imagination. Her sensibilities, heightened, and refined in the bosom of Retirement, know no bounds, except those which the dignity of conscious Worth, and a strong sense of Religion prescribe. It is feared the modern young Ladies will have little sympathy with her, since she is unfashionably enthusiastic, and unfashionably tender.

AN ingenious Friend, after reading the first epistle, remarked, that LOUISA might have described with more interesting particularity her Lover's declaration of his passion, and the manner in which she received that declaration; but the Author thought the present method of conveying that circumstance to the mind of the Reader more poetic. POPE'S ELOISA is minute in her description of the awful Scenery, formed by the rocks, the streams, and mountains of Paraclete, but by no means minute concerning the amorous eclairsissement between herself and Abelard. LOUISA discriminates her Lover's *early* attentions to her, tho' she leaves the manner of his declaring their source very much to the Imagination.

B

Her

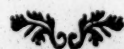
P R E F A C E.

Her application of the beautiful scenic objects, by which she was at that interval surrounded, to her own, and to her Lover's situation; and the passing suddenly to their present altered appearance, contrasts the charms, and bloom of the first, with the chill dreariness of the second. There it was that the Author had in view that striking letter in the 3d Vol. of the *Nouvelle-Heloise*, which describes St. Preaux accompanying Mrs. Wolmar to the rocks of Meillerie, then covered with the richness of Summer-luxuriance; and painting to her the situation of that very Scene, when he had visited it alone, amidst the horrors of Winter, and found those horrors congenial to the temper of his Soul.

THIS Poem has little chance to be popular. A feeling Heart, and a fondness for Verse must *unite* to render it interesting. A feeling Heart without a glowing Imagination will be tired of the Landscape-painting, somewhat luxuriantly interspersed. An Imagination that glows, while the Heart is frozen, has a propensity to fancy every thing prosaic which is not imagery, and will probably yawn over the reasoning of these Lovers, and sicken over their tenderness.

IF, however, this little Work has the honor to interest and please the Few, in whom the kind and sweet affections are blended with poetic taste, the end for which it is published will be obtained.

EXCEPT some slight alterations, which have been made since the two first Editions, the hundred and fifty six lines, with which the poem opens, were written when the Author was only nineteen. They had been mislaid during a long interval. It is sixteen months since they were accidentally recovered. Some few Friends, to whom the Fragment was shewn, thought it worth being extended into a regular Work. The first, and third of these epistles are designed to be descriptive, and sentimental; the second, and last, dramatic.



L O U I S A

T O

E M M A,

HER FRIEND IN THE EAST-INDIES.

OCTOBER 21, 1779.

TH E E, E M M A, four flow-circling years have seen
Press, with thy pensive foot, Savannas green ;
Seen thee, with fond Affection's moisten'd gaze,
And the low-warbled song of former days,
Wind round the shadowy Rock, and shelving Glade,
Where broad Bananas stretch their grateful shade ;
Bend o'er the West thy longing eyes, and chide
The tardy Breeze that fans th' unfreighted Tide.

Now, as with filial care thy light step roves,
Thro' India's palmy plains, and spicy groves,

B 2

To

To blefs thee, exil'd thus in Youth's gay prime,
 May fprightly Health refift the torrid clime,
 Temper the fickly blaft, the fever'd ray,
 And Peace, and Pleafure, lead the fhining Day!
 Yet, when thou know'ft for me, that Sorrow fhrouds
 Hope's cryftal mirror with impervious clouds,
 The fighs, and tears, that tendereft pity fpeak,
 Shall fwell thy breast, and chill thy glowing cheek;
 Since one have been our pleafures, one our cares,
 From the firft dawn of thofe delicious years,
 What time, inspir'd by joy's enlivening powers,
 We chas'd the gilded Infeft thro' the bowers;
 And oh! I fondly tell my anxious heart,
 The deareft truth experience can impart,
 That yet, to quench this fympathy of foul,
 Time, and the world of waters, vainly roll.

O'er this deep Glen, departing Autumn throws,
 With kind reverted glance, a fhort repofe,
 E'er yet fhe leaves her ENGLAND's fading fcene,
 Where fickly yellow ftains the vivid green,

And

And many an icy morn, and stormy gale
Embrown the pathway of the winding vale.

Now, while I seek the bosom of the Glade,
And the thin shelter of th' impoverish'd Shade,
Unequal steps, and rising sighs, disclose
The thorny pressure of tyrannic woes ;
And where th' incumbent Rock, with awful face,
Bends o'er the fountain, gurgling from its base,
And marks the limit of the silent Dell,
Sadly I fit my bosom'd griefs to tell ;
Invoke thy Spirit, those fond griefs to soothe,
And bid, alas ! their surging tide be smooth.

It will not be ;—since here, with yearning thought,
By weak, involuntary impulse brought,
Where Love and Memory bear resistless sway,
And all the weakness of the Soul betray !

O ye known objects !—how ye strike my heart !
And vain regrets, with keener force, impart !

Slow

Slow, thro' the faded grove, past Pleasures glide,
Or sadly linger by the fountain's side.

Dear, awful witness of a broken vow,
Steep Rock, how sternly frowns thy rugged brow !
But, if the frequent blast shall bend thy pines,
Clear at thy foot the crystal water shines !
Tho' drizzling Clouds the misty Mountains veil,
Yet the mild Sun-beam gilds the narrow Dale !
Tho' vernal flow'rs this bank no more adorn,
Nor Summer's wild rose blushes on its thorn,
Yet shelter'd, mossy, dry, and warm, it draws
The heedless roving step to quiet pause.

Thus the pale Year, tho' Nature's edicts urge
Her step to Winter's desolating verge,
Sedately passes to the drear domain,
And breathes, e'en yet, soft comforts o'er the plain ;
But oh ! for me, in Youth's luxuriant glow,
Hope's lovely florets wither as they blow !

No grief my bosom at our parting knew,
 But that of bidding thee a long adieu ;
 And the sweet tears, that such soft sorrows bring,
 Fall, as light rain-drops in the sunny Spring ;
 For youthful Hope, subduing tender Fears,
 Bounds o'er the gulf of interposing Years ;
 While, thro' their course, her airy hands avert
 Misfortune's arrow from the Wanderer's heart.

Soon then did Cheerfulness the morn illumine,
 And Peace descend with Evening's grateful gloom ;
 They saw my breast in that clear spirit gay,
 Which speeds the social hour so fast away.

Now Expectation's fervour rose, to hail
 The youthful Master of this quiet Vale,
 My blooming Brother—from Oxonia's towers,
 Who fought, with tender haste, his native bowers.

'Twas Noon, and ripen'd Summer's fervid ray
 From cloudless Ether shed oppressive day.

As

As on this shady bank I sat reclin'd,
 My voice, that floated on the waving wind,
 Taught the soft echos of the neighboring plains
 Milton's sweet lays, in Handel's matchless strains.
 Prefaging notes my lips unconscious try,
 And murmur—" * Hide me from Day's garish eye!
 Ah! blest, had Death beneath his sable shrine
 Hid me from all the woes that since were mine!

Beneath my trembling fingers lightly rung
 The Lute's sweet chords, responsive while I sung.
 Faint in the yellow broom the Oxen lay,
 And the mute Birds sat languid on the spray;
 And nought was heard, around the noon-tide bower,
 Save, that the mountain Bee, from flower to flower,
 Seem'd to prolong, with her assiduous wing,
 The soft vibration of the tuneful string;
 While the fierce Skies flam'd on the shrinking Rills,
 And sultry Silence brooded o'er the Hills!

As on my lip the lingering cadence play'd,
 My Brother gaily bounded down the glade,

* An enchanting Song of Handel's, from Milton's *Il Penseroso*.

And,

And, while my looks the fire of gladness dart,
 With ardor press'd me to his throbbing heart;
 Then to a graceful Stranger turn'd, whose feet,
 With steps less swift, my coyer welcome meet.
 O'er his fine form, and o'er his glowing face,
 Youth's ripen'd bloom had shed its richest grace;
 Tall as the Pine, amidst inferior Trees,
 With all the bending Ozier's pliant ease.
 O'er his fair brow, the fairer for their shade,
 Locks of the warmest brown luxuriant play'd.
 Blushing he bows!—and gentle awe supplies
 Each flattering meaning to his downcast eyes;
 Sweet, serious, tender, those blue eyes impart
 A thousand dear sensations to the heart;
 Mild as the Evening Star whose shining ray
 Soft in th' unruffled Water seems to play;
 And when he speaks—not Music's thrilling pow'r,
 No, not the vocal Mistress of the bow'r,
 When slow she warbles from the blossom'd spray,
 In liquid blandishment, her evening lay,
 Such soft insinuating sweetness knows,
 As from that voice in melting accent flows!

Yet why, fond Memory ! why, in tints so warm,
 Paint'st thou each beauty of that faultless Form ?
 His specious virtues surely might impart
 Excuse more just for this devoted heart.
 Oh ! how each noble passion's seeming trace,
 Threw transient glories o'er his youthful face !
 How rose, with sudden impulse, swift, and strong,
 For ev'ry secret fraud, and open wrong
 Th' Oppressor acts, the Helpless feel, or fear,
 Disdain's quick throb, and Pity's melting tear !
 So well its part each ductile feature play'd,
 Of worth, such firm, tho' silent promise made,
 That to have doubted its well painted truth,
 Had been to want the primal grace of youth
 Credulity, that scorns, with gen'rous heat,
 Alike to practice, or suspect deceit.

Cease, vain Regrets, excursive Fancy cease !
 Ye only wound afresh my bleeding peace,
 And keep from gentle EMMA's anxious ear
 Th' event she longs, yet kindly dreads, to hear ;

But

But ah! nor singular, nor strange the tale,
 My Sister-Sufferers mourn in every vale;
 For gold, and dazzling state, incessant prove,
 In Man's hard heart, the Murderers of Love.

While many a Sun in Summer-glory rose,
 EUGENIO's lip no softer accent knows
 Than Friendship dictates—but disorder'd praise,
 Scarce half express'd; the musing ardent gaze;
 The varying cheek; the frequent smother'd sigh,
 Reveal the latent meaning of his eye;
 Plain, and yet plainer ev'ry hour, declare
 The shining secrecies, that languish there.

These are the days that fly on Rapture's wing,
 Empurpling ev'ry flower that decks the Spring;
 For when delicious Hope, with whisper bland,
 Wakes the dear magic of her potent wand,
 More vivid colours paint the rising Morn,
 And clearer crystal gems the silver thorn;
 On more luxuriant shade the Noon-beam plays,
 And richer gold the Evening-Sun arrays;

Stars seem to glitter with enamour'd fire,
 And shadowy Hills in statelier grace aspire ;
 More subtle sweetness scents the passing gales,
 And softer beauty decks the moon-light Vales ;
 All Nature smiles ! nor e'en the jocund Day,
 When festal roses strew the bridal way,
 Darts thro' the Virgin breast such keen delight,
 As when soft Fears with gay Belief unite ;
 As Hope, sweet, warm, seducing Hope inspires,
 Which somewhat questions, what it most desires ;
 Reads latent meaning in a Lover's eye,
 Thrills at his glance, and trembles at his sigh ;
 As o'er the Frame disorder'd transport pours,
 When only less than Certainty is ours.

At length, that rosy Certainty appears,
 With faithless promises of golden years.
 Here, by this fountain side, EUGENIO strove
 To trace the tender progress of his love ;
 'Twas on the Evening of a splendid Day ;—
 Calm on the gilded grass the fountain lay !

But

But oh ! when doubt, in that dear moment, fled,
A calm more funny o'er my bosom spread !

As the gay Lark his last clear carol sung,
And on a flanting Sun-beam warbling hung,
With sweeter music trill'd the vesper lay,
Than when he soar'd amid the blaze of Day ;
But yet a thousand times more sweet the sound,
In which my Soul its dearest blessing found !

Slow on the Sun had stol'n the failing Cloud,
And drawn o'er his gay fires the purple shroud,
Then roll'd away !—till, by no shade repress'd,
Afar the setting Orb emblaz'd the West ;
Lighted with arrowy beams the Ocean caves,
And sunk with splendor in the illumin'd waves !

Thus oft would Modesty her blush employ,
Coyly to veil the radiance of my joy ;
But from these eyes the sun-bright gladness beam'd,
And all the triumph of my bosom stream'd !

'Twas

'Twas here,—e'en here !—where now I fit reclined,
 And Winter's sighs found hollow in the Wind ;
 Loud, and more loud the blast of Evening raves,
 And strips the Oaks of their last, lingering leaves ;
 The eddying foliage in the tempest flies,
 And fills with duskier gloom the thickning Skies.
 Red sinks the Sun, behind the howling Hill,
 And rushes, with hoarse stream, the mountain Rill,
 And now, with ruffling billow, cold, and pale,
 Runs, swollen, and dashing, down the lonely Vale ;
 While, to these tear-full eyes, Grief's faded form,
 Sits on the Cloud, and sighs amid the Storm !

Yet, dreary Vale ! detain thy pensive Guest,
 Tho' drizzling fleet beats cold upon her breast !
 To this sad Soul more welcome are thy glooms,
 Than Spring's green bowers, or Summer's gaudy blooms ;
 Nor asks an Heart, that only breathes to sigh,
 A warmer mansion, or a kinder Sky !

And still that destin'd Heart, so fond to mourn,
 And dwell on scenes, which never can return,

Shrinks,

Shrinks, e'en as guilty bosoms shrink from shame,
 To join with *Perfidy* EUGENIO's name ;
 Feels its soft streams in ev'ry pulse recede
 From the pain'd mention of one barborous deed,
 That kills my hopes, like Eurus' fierce career
 On the bright foliage of the early year ;
 Which turns, while premature its buds disclose,
 To livid yellowness the damask Rose.

Thou see'st, my EMMA with what fond delay
 Th' unwilling Spirit loiters on her way ;
 Clings to past scenes that wore gay Summer's form ;
 Clings to the wildness of the wintry Storm,
 To stop the sad narration, e'er it throw,
 Dark on my fate, the long, long night of Woe.

Yet, O my Soul ! resume it, e'er the power
 Of wasting Sickness brings the fever'd Hour,
 That stops th' ill-guided pen in the weak hand,
 And shakes from Life's dim glass the ebbing sand !

Thou,

Thou, E M M A, wilt not blame my easy youth,
 That soon this Heart declar'd its tenderest truth.
 Ah ! could I dream he feign'd, whose glances warm
 With ceaseless ardor wander'd o'er my form ?
 And as gay smiles, and youthful graces fair,
 Shone in my eyes, and harmoniz'd my air,
 Not one unheeded pass'd his eager gaze,
 His fervent, yet discriminating praise ;
 Tho' oft he swore, amid the fond survey,
 The Mind they grac'd was lovelier far than they ;
 Protested oft, that Mind was form'd to share
 Each high-soul'd purpose, and each virtuous care ;
 Catch ev'ry new idea, as it rose,
 Partake his joys, and melt with all his woes ;
 False could I think that vow, whose starting tear
 Sprung, the warm witness of a faith sincere ?

Now dawn'd th' appointed, but unwelcome Day,
 That bore my dearest Brother far away,
 Where foreign Climes might store his ripening Youth,
 With Observation, Science, Taste, and Truth.

The

The same sad Day my lov'd EUGENIO figh'd
 Adieus impassion'd to his promis'd Bride;
 Yet often urg'd, inspiring faithless ease,
 That between *us* Fate spread no cruel *Seas*;
 Alas! in his chang'd Heart my eyes explore,
 Of Falsehood's waves,—a Sea,—without a Shore!

Where Thames expands with Freedom's wealthy pride,
 Attractive Commerce calls him to her Tide;
 As with firm step she runs along the Strand,
 And points to the tall Ship, the distant Land.
 His rising interests on the call attend,
 For with a Father's prosperous fate they blend.
 Thus, with these interests, Duty's filial power
 Unites to tear him from LOUISA's bower;
 But parting Sorrows yield them to the force
 Of strong Necessity's resistless course,
 By generous Confidence when lull'd to rest,
 That broods, on dove-like pinion, o'er the breast;
 While, from kind letters, rays of joy pervade
 The gloomy moments of the love-sick Maid;

D

And

And oh ! how warm, how bright those letters glow'd,
 What ardent Love, in melting language flow'd,
 My dearest EMMA, thou wilt ne'er explore ;
 The brilliant Talismans are mine no more !
 Pride, Virgin-Pride, pronounc'd the stern behest,
 And tore the faithless Scriptures from my breast !

Thro' four sweet months, to my delighted eyes
 These precious tablets of my bliss arise !
 At length, dread Silence,—torturing Doubt, and Fear,
 Prompt the pang'd sigh—but check the softer tear ;
 Thro' the lone Day, and lonelier Night, impart
 “ The Hope deferr'd, that maketh sick the Heart.”
 Wish'd Morning comes !—and Hour succeeds to Hour !
 But still, Suspense, and Terror o'er me lower ;
 Chace each conjecture kind, with fierce controul,
 And send their cruel ice-bolt thro' my soul.

Three wretched weeks my throbbing bosom bears
 The wounding conflict of its various fears.
 While Rumour's voice inflames my grief, and pride,
 And gives EUGENIO to a wealthier Bride.

My

My trembling hands, the sick suspense to ease,
 From Day to Day the public records seize;
 While glances, rapid as the meteor's ray,
 Eager amidst the crowded columns stray;
 Snatch at sad Certainty from busy Fame,
 Yet dread to meet my dear EUGENIO's Name.

Now glooms on the stain'd page the barborous Truth,
 And blights each blooming promise of my youth!
 EUGENIO *married!*—Anguish, and Despair,
 In ev'ry pompous killing letter glare!
 Thy Love, a Sacrifice to glut thy Pride!—
 Ah! what avail the riches of thy Bride!
 Can they avail, remorseless as thou art,
 To tear the wrong'd LOUISA from thy heart?

Gold, and ye Gems, that lurk in Eastern Cave,
 Or to the Sun your gay resplendence wave,
 Can joys sincere, one heart-felt transport live
 In ought ye purchase, or in ought ye give?
 A Bliss, to rival those thy avarice lost,
 Insolvent INDIA shall but vainly boast!

Was it for *this* my gentle Brother's heart
 Bore in our growing loves so warm a part !
 That soft Indulgence deck'd his open brows,
 That Smiles fraternal hail'd our mutual vows !
 And, as he kindly breath'd the parting sigh,
 Love's crystal fluid rushing to his eye,
 Was it for *this* our blooming Hopes he blest,
 Seiz'd our twined hands, and clasp'd them to his breast ?
 Ah ! did he know his lov'd LOUISA's fate,
 What Energy would nerve his rising Hate !
 Hasten, my LORENZO, to thy Sister's aid !
 With thy swift vengeance be her wrongs repaid !
 Ye rising Winds, his wandering Sails restore !
 Ye reflux Waters, bear him to the Shore !

And thou, vain Bride ! enjoy the Meteor-ray,
 The fancied sun-beam of thy nuptial Day !
 Stern Fury waits, to quench its transient light,
 In deep, enfanguin'd, everlasting Night !
 Bleed, Faithless, bleed !—LOUISA's Wrongs explor'd,
 Shall frown relentless on her Brother's sword !

—Rash,

—Rash, lost LOUISA!—could'st thou bear the strife?
 Throw on a fatal chance thy Brother's life?
 Or stretch, a victim to thy proud disdain,
 EUGENIO, pale, and bleeding, on the plain?
 Endure that from a bosom, once so dear,
 Convulsive pangs the trembling Life should tear?
 Oh! should'st thou, certain of the cruel truth,
 Behold, in Fancy's eye, the slaughter'd Youth,
 Could'st thou that lov'd, that lovely Form survey,
 And see it faded to insensate Clay?
 Eternal darkness on those eye-lids hung?
 Eternal silence stiffen on that tongue?
 No! wildly, from the bare surmise, I start,
 And treble fondness rushes thro' my heart;
 Live!—live EUGENIO!—free from fierce alarms,
 Blest, if thou can'st, e'en in my Rival's arms!
 O! safe, thro' lengthen'd years, may'st thou remain
 From all the varied forms of deathful Pain!
 From injur'd Honor's unrelenting ire,
 The blast of Accident, the Fever's fire!
 Soft may those dangerous graces melt away,
 And gently sink in scarce perceiv'd decay!

For

For this my breast its cureless woes shall hide,
 Nor sting fraternal Love, nor generous Pride.
 Yes, dear LORENZO! thou shalt still believe,
 Tho' much the thought thy gentle breast will grieve,
 LOUISA, lost to tenderness, and truth,
 In the vain levity of thoughtless Youth,
 Prov'd to EUGENIO's love a cold Ingrate,
 And lightly splenetic *deserv'd* her fate.

Cruel Rememberance! how shall I assuage
 The yearning pangs of thy incessant rage?
 What balmy comfort can the Heart pervade,
 When bitter tears his broken faith upbraid,
 Whose hand, we fondly hop'd, should wipe away
 Their flowing sorrows thro' each future Day?
 Since in Reflection's grasp each Blessing dies,
 When the forc'd struggling Spirit must despise
 Him who, encircled with Perfection's zone,
 Long in our sight scarce less than Angel shone.
 For if Credulity her warmth impart,
 With veils of Light she screens the selfish Heart;

But

But barborous Perfidy's severe extreme,
In shades eternal, shrouds each gorgeous beam.

On the arch'd windows thus, that proudly grace
An high majestic Temple's awful face,
When pours the setting Sun its darting rays,
An hundred solar Orbs appear to blaze ;
But when th' incumbent shades of lowering Night
Curtain the source of this illusive light,
Its evanescent fires no more remain,
But Horrors gather round the darken'd Fane ;
The lofty Turrets, desolately grand,
In dreary state, and lonely silence stand ;
Thro' the dim Ailes pale Spectres seem to fleet,
And hollow groans the whispering Walls repeat.

So round EUGENIO's form, that rises yet,
'Mid Pride's cold frown, and Passion's warm regret,
Depriv'd of all the lustre it retain'd,
When gay Belief with sunny hue remain'd,
Incessant now the Fiends of avarice glide,
With dark Ambition scowling at their side.

Detested

Detested impotence of flatter'd charms,
 That could not bind my Wanderer to my arms !
 Ah ! what avail'd your beauties, but to lure
 That fleeting Love, ye knew not to secure !

Like opening flow'rs, that deck the desert Glade,
 Fair to no purpose, flatter'd Graces fade !—
 One healing draught—and all shall yet be well !
 “ Peace is the pale-ey'd Sister of the Cell,”
 The cell of DEATH—where Misery only knows
 The soft exemption,—and the long repose.

Ah no !—a guardian Spirit seems to say,
 “ Stay thee, LOUISA, yet a little stay !
 “ Awake not righteous Heaven's avenging Hate
 “ By rashly plunging in the waves of Fate !
 “ Tho' Time, for woes like thine, admits no cure,
 “ Yet learn its hardest lesson, to endure !
 “ Not long shall life her torturing sense impart
 “ Of the barb'd shaft, that rankles in thy heart.
 “ Thou shalt not need to stain thy spotless Soul,
 “ Nor want th' enfanguin'd knife, th' envenom'd bowl ;
 “ Thy

“ Thy Soul’s Belov’d, by vain ambition fired,
 “ Deaf, as the Grave, to all that once inspired,
 “ To Love’s soft voice,—to Honor’s awful plea,
 “ Lives to another!—and is lost to thee!”

EUGENIO *married!*—Oh!—yon Village-bell,
 That flings on the cold Gale its mournful knell!
 The solemn pause,—the loud repeated toll,
 Calling the pale Corse to its darksome goal,
 Not plainer there the tale of Death relate,
 Than these detested words pronounce my fate!
 EUGENIO *married*, seals LOUISA’S doom,
 Her sure, tho’ lingering passport to the tomb!

And thou, soft Mourner o’er my bosom’s smart!
 Friend of my Soul, and Sister of my Heart!
 A fallen Blossom while thy tears embalm,
 Regrets that Fondness prompts, let Fondness calm;
 Since tho’ this mortal Frame, Affection’s slave,
 Wastes by th’ envenom’d wound that Falsehood gave,
 I still possess, thus withering in my youth,
 The peace of Innocence, the pride of Truth;

E

My

My Soul is conscious of its heavenly Sire,
 The Cherub Faith has lent her wings of fire ;
 Man, the base object of my scorn, it leaves,
 To join that gracious Power, that ne'er deceives !

When busy Rumours to thy ear disclose
 The long enfranchisement of all my woes,
 Oh ! let thy Mind's pure eye behold me soar
 Where Light, and Life from Springs unfailing pour !
 Mark the bright circlets of th' eternal Morn,
 In radiant points, my smiling brows adorn !
 By kindred Seraphs see thy Friend embraced,
 Not one flight thought on false EUGENIO waste !
 Yet, tho' from Pain, and Grief for ever free,
 Throw back soft Pity's tender glance on thee !
 Smile at the human weakness of thy tears,
 And long to welcome thee to HAPPIER SPHERES !

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE.

S E C O N D E P I S T L E.

E U G E N I O

T O

E M M A ,

ON HER RETURN FROM THE EAST-INDIES.

APRIL 15, 1781.

START not, dear E M M A, at an hapless name,
Veil'd to thy sense in perfidy and shame!
Oh! deep indeed the mists, they long have spread,
To Fancy's eye, round this devoted head!
While deeper still the shades of anguish lower,
Drear as the Night upon the wintry Bower,
When bitter Winds howl fearful o'er the plains,
And the bright Stars are quench'd amid the rains!

So quench'd each smiling Pleasure's roseate ray,
That once illumin'd lost EUGENIO's way!

But, e'er his tortur'd Soul's incessant strife
Burst the dark confines of disastrous Life,
Given, or with-held, by EMMA's guardian hands,
As her Friend's peace hereafter best demands,
Will she receive EUGENIO's last request,
In faithful trust for her LOUISA's breast,
Hear his sad story—that yet dares appear
To claim her justice, and implore her tear?

If so, let now thy gentle heart incline
To mourn the trials, and the pangs of mine!
No longer shalt thou think I basely sold
My peace, my liberty, my love, for gold;
That gold did purchase them, we know too well,
But Oh! no *sordid* sacrifice they fell!
Learn then those dire Events, whose tyrant sway
Forc'd me to throw joy's vital root away,
Yield my LOUISA to their stern controul,
Gem of my youth! and day-star of my soul!

To

To thee, so long accustom'd to disclose
 Whate'er on Life the strengthen'd colour throws,
 To thee LOUISA questionless appeal'd ;
 Reveal'd my vows, my broken faith reveal'd ;
 Taught thee, thro' scenes, now past and gone, to rove,
 And hate the mean apostate to his love.

Veil'd by her native Groves, I left the Maid,
 And journied onward from that blooming Glade,
 With eyes, full oft reverted as I pass'd,
 With many a look to Heaven in fervor cast,
 To implore protection for LOUISA's peace,
 Her health's dear safety, and our love's increase.

E'er yet I join'd the animated Train,
 Whose full-fraught Vessels seek the ports of Gain,
 To that domestic scene I bent my way,
 Which far in * Deva's woodland mazes lay ;

* The River Deva, celebrated by Milton, and other of our Poets, rises in Merionethshire, and flows thro' mountainous and beautiful scenery, still, as it is said, retaining its original name. In Cheshire it assumes that of Dee, which led some of the Commentators on the first Edition of this Poem to suppose the Villa of Ernesto in that county ; but the author meant to place it in Wales, on the banks of the Deva, before it changes its title for one so much less harmonious, and waters a country more fertile, but much less lovely.

A rural

A rural kind Retreat from all the cares,
 Which busy Commerce for her Sons prepares.
 Translucent Deva the green Valley laves,
 And darkling Alders screen her wandering waves,
 Till flow she rises from o'er-hanging Shades,
 And, seen at distance, thro' the opening Glades,
 With bank less veil'd, and streams that mildly shine,
 Leads round the lonely Hills her silver line.

In that sweet Dale, and by a Mountain's side,
 Whose sheltering heights the angry North deride,
 Abode, so late, of Cheerfulness and Ease,
 White gleams the Mansion thro' the waving Trees!
 Tall are the Trees that whisper round its Walls,
 And soft the pathway down the Valley falls!
 Oh! how each charm, that decks the quiet scene,
 Assum'd new grace, and wore a softer mein,
 From the blest thought, that soon the nuptial Hour
 Would lead LOUISA to my native bower!

'Twas there my gentle Parents often knew
 The calm sweet Night, the Day that lightly flew;

And

And there the heart-felt pleasure gaily shew'd
 EUGENIO's welcome to the green abode.
 A Father's elevating gladness proved
 How dear the presence of the Son he loved.
 My gentle Mother, archly smiling, prest
 The love-sick Wanderer to her honor'd breast ;
 For so she fondly call'd her darling Youth,
 Yet lov'd his ardor, and approv'd his truth.
 My Sisters, fair, ingenuous, graceful Maids,
 Th' acknowledg'd pride of all the neighbouring Shades,
 Met me with bounding step, and joyous mein,
 And rays of transport brightened all the scene.

Nor wilt thou, mighty Love ! upbraid my Heart,
 For bearing in their joys so warm a part ;
 Since no ambition gloom'd my Father's brow,
 No thirst of wealth reproach'd my plighted vow ;
 He scorn'd to name LOUISA's want of gold,
 But gladly listened while her worth I told.
 Pleas'd has he seen her in this melting eye,
 Pleas'd with her name, half whispered in a sigh ;

Then

Then would I grasp his hand, and ardent say,
 " Oft shall my Parents bless our bridal Day,
 " Since from that Soul of sweetness, they shall share
 " A Daughter's tenderness, an Angel's care ;
 " For her's each Virtue, and each Grace refin'd,
 " That breathe on Loveliness the glow of Mind,
 " And, with assiduous Duty's cheering pow'r,
 " Strew Life's worn path with ev'ry filial flow'r."

One Eve, as on the shady bank I rode,
 Where thro' new Dales the beauteous Deva flow'd,
 Loitering I listen to the Red-breast clear,
 The last, lone Songster of the waning Year.
 Light o'er the leaves sweet Autumn breathes serene,
 And tips with gold their yet unfaded green.
 Now many a vapor grey the stream exhales,
 And Twilight steals unheeded on the Vales ;
 O'er the hill-top the lines of crimson run,
 The glowing raiments of the vanish'd Sun ;
 Nor yet the deep'ning shades of Night impede
 My roving course, which pensive musings lead,

What

What time the * Moon of Ceres mildly throws
 Her shadowy grace, and breathes her soft repose
 O'er the dark Shrubs, that clothe the rocky Steeps,
 Shelve from their tops, and fringe the crystal Deeps ;
 While, as around those Rocks the River glides,
 White moon-beams tremble in the glancing tides.

Sudden, wild sounds are borne along the gales !
 The piercing shriek my startled ear assails !
 But scarce a moment, with check'd rein, I stand,
 Th' uplifted cane grasp'd sternly in my hand,
 E'er bending forward o'er my eager Horse,
 Urging, with needless spur, his rapid course,
 And plunging thro' the deep, opposing flood,
 I pierce the tangled mazes of the Wood.
 On fibrous Oaks, that roughen all the ground,
 My Steed's fleet hoofs, with hollow noise, resound ;
 And doubled by the echos from the caves,
 Appal a guilty band of desperate Slaves ;
 For soon, in ruthless, felon-gripe, I found
 A beauteous Female, screaming on the ground ;

* *Moon of Ceres*, the Harvest Moon.

F

Dragg'd

Dragg'd from her Horse, that graz'd unconscious near,
 Her tresses torn, and frantic with her fear.
 Two liveried Youths, attendant on the Maid,
 At the first onset in that gloomy Glade,
 Had, or seduced by Gold, or wing'd by dread,
 From danger, and from duty, coward fled.

Alarm'd, the Villains quit their struggling Prey,
 And two, with terror struck, speed fast away.
 Fiercer the third, the arm of blood extends ;
 The levell'd tube, in dire direction, bends !
 Yet no cold fear arrests my vengeful force,
 And his wing'd death-ball flies with erring course ;
 But not descends my nervous blow in vain,
 The hidden lead indents the Murderer's brain ;
 With one demoniac glance, as down he fell,
 The Soul starts furious from its vital cell.

Then tender pity, and assiduous care,
 Conduct me swiftly to the swooning Fair.
 The light, cool drops, scoop'd from the neighbouring spring,
 O'er her pale brow solicitous I fling ;

Till

Till Life's warm tide, which long the Heart detains,
Returns, flow purpling the forsaken veins.

In one deep sigh, as Recollection came,
It wakens Gratitude's impetuous flame.

“ For more than Life,” exclaims the trembling Maid,
“ I stand indebted to thy generous aid.”

‘ Cease, Fair-One, cease.—well might this arm deserve
‘ That deadliest Palfies wither ev’ry nerve,
‘ Had it refus’d the aid to thee it gave,
‘ Or coward shunn’d the duty of the Brave !
‘ But let me now, since danger haunts delay,
‘ To safer scenes my lovely Charge convey.
‘ Deep in yon vale, ERNESTO’S modest Dome
‘ Lifts its fair head—my tranquil, happy home !
‘ There ev’ry welcome shall her steps receive,
‘ That hospitable affluence knows to give.’

This said, her trembling Form, with anxious haste,
My twining arms on her light Courser placed ;

Then, as emerging from the darkling Wood,
 Along the moon-bright Dales we slowly rode,
 Surpris'd his gorgeous trappings I behold,
 The net of Silver, and the thongs of gold;
 While all the vestments of the lovely Dame
 The pride of elevated rank proclaim.
 The costly lace had golden leaves imprest
 Light on the borders of the pearly vest;
 Her taper waist the broider'd zone entwines,
 Clasp'd by a Gem, the boast of Orient Mines;
 On as we pass, on ev'ry side it gleams,
 And to the Moon, in trembling lustre, streams!

Dear E M M A, that the splendid garb could gain,
 E'en in an hour exempt from grief and pain
 Th' attentive gaze, proves my devoted heart
 From eyes so bright met no resistless dart;
 For when the Maid Love's potent cestus wears,
 The jealous God no glance dividual bears.

Ah! in those halcyon days, a Mind at ease
 Empower'd flight things to interest, and to please;

That

That Memory should their faded tints relume,
 When Deprivation's deepest shadows gloom,
 Perhaps seems strange!—but now, that full, and free,
 My long imprison'd Spirit springs to thee,
 Friend of my Love! to whom I dare reveal
 All that my Soul has felt, or knows to feel,
 So soften'd seem th' asperities of Grief,
 My Senses anchor on the kind relief;
 With trivial circumstance retard the pen,
 E'er languid Solitude shall lower again;
 For oh! when lost in woes of lengthen'd date,
 Alone we've lean'd upon the thorn of Fate,
 Seeking, at last, the kind assuasive rest,
 Found only on Compassion's downy breast,
 We feel, as soft th' imparted Sorrows flow,
 Almost discharg'd the bitterness of Woe.

Within ERNESTO's hospitable gates,
 Alarm'd at my delay, Affection waits;
 But as I lead the bright distinguish'd Maid,
 Explain her danger, and my prosperous aid,

The

The dear Inhabitants around her move,
With deep respect, kind care, and generous love.

And soon we learn, our peaceful walls contain
The splendid Heiress of a vast Domain,
EMIRA, she, whose wealth, and charms inspire,
The croud of titled Youth with amorous fire ;
While Rumour paints her, 'midst th' obsequious Train,
Tho' frolic, insolent ; tho' haughty, vain.
But to our eyes, these wild and wandering fires
Are screen'd by rising Hopes, and gay Desires ;
For still, the parting Hour with care delay'd,
EMIRA loiters in ERNESTO'S shade ;
The noon-tide Sun, the Evening's softer ray
Beholds the Fair-One thro' the Valley stray ;
Thus, on * MATILDA leaning, fondly own
Her Heart's new choice in Passion's warmest tone.

“ Lost to the World, for ever could I dwell
“ In the dear precincts of this sylvan Cell ;

* EUGENIO'S Sister.

“ Renounce

" Renounce each vain, tho' once ador'd delight,
 " That dissipates the Day, or gilds the Night ;
 " That can each gay seducing art employ,
 " To flatter Beauty, and inspirit Joy."

Thus the proud Maid, of all her scorn disarm'd,
 By strange, and partial preference strongly charm'd,
 Feels a new Eden steal upon the bowers,
 And chides with sighs the swiftly fleeting Hours ;
 Still at the cheerful Board, or as she roves
 Along the Plain, or lingers in the Groves,
 Each glowing wish, from new-born Passion sprung,
 Each soft disorder, on her eye-lids hung,
 At my approach reveal, tho' much in vain,
 What words are little wanted to explain.
 Vain ! had I never seen the matchless grace,
 The touching sweetness of LOUISA's face ;
 Where from each feature beams, or mildly plays,
 Refined intelligence, with varying rays ;
 Where native dignity, with air serene,
 Conscious, not arrogant, adorns her mein ;

While

While from those eyes, in scorn of artful wiles,
 The tender spotless Soul looks out, and smiles.—
 These unbeheld, yet still EMIRA's charms
 Had ne'er allur'd EUGENIO to her arms;
 For oh! the fever'd languor of the eye,
 The restless blushes, the voluptuous sigh,
 Th' impatient haughtiness, but half conceal'd,
 The rage of pleasure in each glance reveal'd,
 Tho' in youth's fervid hours, perchance they fire
 The kindling ardours of unaw'd Desire,
 Quench, while the transient flames their force impart,
 The torch of Passion, e'er it reach the Heart.

'Twas thus the youthful Ithacan survey'd
 The Goddess Nymph, beneath her magic Shade;
 While Eucharis' mild beauties foil'd the sway
 Of charms, that deck'd the Daughter of the Day;
 By Love protected, when the Princely Boy
 Beheld the Dame her wonted lures employ;
 Saw her fine Form, by all the Graces drest,
 The glowing purple of the floating vest,

And

And on her blooming cheek the tresses bright,
 That play'd in wavy wreaths of golden light,
 Or on her snowy bosom, shining fell,
 Like a warm Sun-beam on a Lilly's bell.

Not more EMIRA's charms my Soul engage,
 The fair Calypso of a sensual age;
 And than licentious Beauty less, the stores
 That splendid Fortune on EMIRA pours;
 Or the proud boast of lineal Blood, allied
 To Rank, and Pow'r, could wake that senseless Pride,
 Which quenches the soft warmth that Love inspires,
 And lights the nuptial torch with rayless fires.

To save the Fair-One from the thorny smart
 Of hopeless Passion, rankling in her heart,
 I urge my gentle Sisters to reveal
 All my charm'd senses for LOUISA feel;
 The worth, the graces, which around her wait,
 And all the smiling prospect of our fate.

G

EMIRA

EMIRA listens with impassion'd scorn,
 Of wounded Pride, and rival Anger born.
 Unwish'd, unwelcome, as the theme arose,
 Her clouded cheek in deep suffusion glows,
 Proudly exclaiming,—“ Can EUGENIO prove
 “ Cold, and obdurate to my lavish Love?
 “ Has Beauty's magic zone my bosom bound,
 “ Does Rank exalt me, and has Fortune crown'd,
 “ That faint attractions in a Village Maid
 “ Should shield the Passions which these eyes invade?
 “ Impossible!—but oh! thy lips impart
 “ The sting of jealousy, that goads my heart.
 “ MATILDA, all my waking dreams divine
 “ Thy charming Brother shall at length be mine!
 “ This groveling flame was but ordain'd to prove
 “ Thy Friend's wish'd triumph at the shrine of Love,
 “ And by comparison of brighter charms,
 “ To light EUGENIO to EMIRA's arms.”

Thus, while self-flatt'ring Pride her Mind assures,
 The artful Fair-One spreads her varied lures;

Sometimes,

Sometimes, with archness laughing in her eyes,
 Hangs on my arm, and ridicules my sighs;
 And oft with coy tenderness appears,
 While Love's warm glances steal thro' shining tears;
 Now, with arch'd brow, and supercilious stare,
 Affects the empress-dignity of air;
 And now, as reasoning with a wayward Heart,
 In trances, broken by the frequent start,
 With pausing step she wanders thro' the Grove,
 A female Proteus in the wiles of Love!

To muse at leisure on my lovely Maid,
 And woo her image in the lonely Glade,
 Where no EMIRA, by the rigid laws
 Politeness dictates, my attention draws,
 Far in the Wilds I wander thro' the Day,
 And to a lowly Cot at midnight stray;
 There taste the sweetness of that deep repose,
 Which from applauding Conscience gently flows,
 When Health, and Hope their downy pinions spread,
 And scatter roses on the youthful bed.

Light with the Dawn disperse my tender dreams ;
 And now the Sun looks golden on the streams !—
 O Morn ! the last for me that gaily rose,
 On Memory's tablet still thy beauty glows.
 Charm'd, as I wander'd thro' the dewy Vale,
 And drank the spirit of the Mountain-gale,
 How little did my unconscious heart divine,
 The joys thou gav'st should ne'er again be mine !

On as I rov'd along the winding Glades,
 A Youth in haste the sylvan Copse pervades !
 Says, his commission instantly recalls
 My devious step to the paternal walls.
 Upon the rustic countenance appears
 A fix'd solemnity, that wakes my fears.—
 “ Oh ! is all well ? ”—with breathless haste I cry,
 “ Thy Friends are well, ”—his faltering lips reply ;
 Then dread, lest sad intelligence invade
 The precious quiet of my native Shade,
 Sickens my heart ;—and swiftly as I go,
 From my pale lip disorder'd accents flow ;

Each

Each moment, for LOUISA's Life, arise
Prayers, that implore the mercies of the Skies.

And now my quick, unequal steps are led,
A Day of gladness where they us'd to spread;
But ah! no silver tones EUGENIO call!
No bounding foot-step meets me in the hall!
Suspense, with all its heavy heart-ach, teems,
And palpable the solemn stillness seems!

So, when returning from the well-fought plain,
As near thy Castle-walls thou led'st thy Train,
O * Hardiknute! such pangs as these oppress,
In Hope's warm hour, thy brave, and veteran breast.
Along the midnight glooms, that thick impend,
While howls the Storm, the beating Rains descend,
Thou see'st no Guard upon thy turrets height,
Whose streaming torches us'd to gild the night!
Black, as a mourning weed, they silent stand,
And daunt the stoutest heart in Scotia's Land!

* See the admired scotch fragment, HARDIKNUTE, in Percy's collection of ancient poetry.

Appall'd,

Appall'd, like him, I felt the stillness dire;
 Eager to learn—not daring to enquire,
 As one transfix'd, a few dread minutes wait,
 While silent Horror shrouds impending Fate!

My Father enter'd—with a cheek how pale!
 And oh! that look!—it told an awful tale!
 'Twas mournful!—supplicating!—"Heavenly Powers!
 "In that dim gaze how deep an anguish lowers!
 "LOUISA! lives she?"—dreading the reply,
 My Soul hung trembling in my straining eye.

"My Son, the sweet LOUISA lives,—and knows,
 "I hope, the peace that Innocence bestows;
 "Oh! may it long be her's!—but now remains
 "A task for me, replete with sharpest pains!—
 "EUGENIO!—Penury's dire blasts assail,
 "And Hope is frozen in the bitter gale!
 "Yes,—BELMOR has deceiv'd my boundless trust,
 "To Friendship treacherous, and to Faith unjust!
 "Unhappy Hour, when Confidence intire
 "Lur'd me to follow that misleading fire,

"Those

“ Those gay commercial visions, false, and vain,
 “ The glittering meteors of his artful brain !
 “ Too well he knew no genuine light they gave,
 “ And now they sink in Ruin’s whelming wave !

“ Oh ! great, and numberless the Ills, that spread
 “ Their mingled horrors round this aged head !
 “ The pang of seeing thy sweet Sisters, born
 “ To fairest hopes, from ease, and affluence torn !
 “ Expos’d to all those guileful snares, that wait
 “ The beauteous Indigent’s disastrous fate !
 “ Ills, whose bare dread a Father’s bosom tears,
 “ And blends with agony his anxious cares.
 “ Thy dearer Mother !”—Here he turn’d his head
 And pausing wept ;—at length resum’g, said,

“ These hovering woes, that o’er our house impend,
 “ Thou, my dear Son, e’er their dread weight descend,
 “ Thou canst avert !—but oh ! at what a price !
 “ Persuasion shall not urge—nor prayers intice.

“ Two

“ Two hours e’er thy return, EMIRA found
 “ Thy Sisters eyes in streaming torrents drown’d ;
 “ Learn’d, from their trembling lips, the cruel Cause,
 “ Which the dark cloud of consternation draws
 “ Wide o’er my Roof—that yesterday survey’d,
 “ Domestic Comfort’s fair, and favorite shade.

“ We know that Fortune on EMIRA pours
 “ Her golden treasures in unstinted showers.—
 “ EUGENIO!—she stands ready to replace
 “ Thy Father’s comforts on a lasting base!
 “ Rescue his falling Fame!—the numbers save,
 “ Whose hopes in his destruction find a grave;
 “ And light, while Woe’s dark cloud her wealth removes,
 “ Joy’s living spark in many an eye he loves!
 “ But at the price—Great God!—thy Father’s fears
 “ Shrink from the sound, and overwhelm it with his tears!
 “ By sharp Distress at last to name it driven!—
 “ Thy hand to her,—e’en at the ALTAR given!—
 “ Alas! th’ impossibility e’en now
 “ Grooms in the grief, the horror of thy brow!—

“ Oh !

" Oh ! for *myself*—I could not wish to gain
 " Exemption from the sharpest earthly pain,
 " By banishing each hope, his Love had won,
 " From the kind, duteous bosom of my Son !
 " But for their dearer fakes who fall with me,
 " Perhaps I dare—to hope e'en *this* from thee.

" Thou know'st, when Peace, and Plenty's jocund Powers
 " Hung their ripe clusters round our blooming bowers,
 " The joys that Love, not those which Wealth impart,
 " Form'd the warm wish for thee, that fill'd my heart ;
 " But now—EUGENIO listen !—could'st thou bear
 " LOUISA's breast this weight of woes should share ?
 " Would'st thou the blossoms of her youth transplant
 " Into the blasting soil of worldly Want ?
 " Whose pangs, tho' ne'er her soft complaints reveal,
 " She will not therefore less severely feel ;
 " Since when a breast, far dearer than our own,
 " Receives the darts by that fell Demon thrown,
 " Fast wasting health, and spirits broke, will prove,
 " Far from extracted, they are barb'd by Love."

H

Here

Here sighs, that seem'd to shake his frame, betray'd
 How deep he felt the sorrows he pourtray'd ;
 But yet, tho' still his heart with anguish bled,
 Fail'd speech recovering soon, again he said,

“ It is not much my waning Life's remains
 “ Should shorten'd sink by Penury's cruel pains ;
 “ Ah ! rather could I bear their utmost strife,
 “ Than wish to quench the torch that gilds thy Life,
 “ Sweet *Possibility* ! which yet appears,
 “ Borne on th' eventful flight of days, and years,
 “ Whose chance propitious might each bar remove
 “ Or Industry restore the joys of Love ;
 “ Tho' sharp the consciousness, that BELMOR's art
 “ Must to my Fame the deadliest wound impart !
 “ For oh ! the Many, who their ruin owe
 “ To my rash hopes unhappy overthrow,
 “ Will, without scruple, think by fraud I won
 “ The confidence, which drew that ruin on.

“ Hard to resign, for such opprobrious blame,
 “ The honest triumph of a spotless name ;

“ E'en

“ E’en when the Heart dares to itself appeal
 “ From blind Injustice, and misguided Zeal !
 “ Their torrent Reason strives to stem in vain,
 “ Truth pleads to Air, if Prejudice arraign.
 “ Her censures daily level with the Base
 “ A thousand names, no actual crimes disgrace ;
 “ Pull down the fame a Life of virtue built,
 “ And stamp Imprudence with the brand of Guilt.
 “ And yet, I would not ask my Child to save
 “ From Pains, that seem to rob of rest the *Grave*,
 “ My hapless Spirit, at a price so great,
 “ To shade perchance with deeper gloom his fate !
 “ But, oh ! my lov’d EUGENIO !—from a woe,
 “ Sharper, I trust, than thou wilt ever know,
 “ My Sense recoils !—my Wife !—my dearest Wife !
 “ The sweet Companion of my lengthen’d Life !
 “ Thy Mother !—for whose peace, and health, my cares,
 “ My fond attention, my incessant prayers
 “ The Day, and Night beheld !—Oh ! must I see
 “ That dear One pine in helpless Poverty ?
 “ While pale, and trembling, sinks the vital flame,
 “ Must her soft, delicate, and feeble Frame,

“ To Charity’s donation, cold, and scant,
 “ Owe its exemption from extremest want?
 “ Can I see this—unable to obtain
 “ Those common comforts the *Laborious* gain,
 “ Conscious, my own infatuated rashness shed
 “ This bitter phial on her gentle head?
 “ My Son!—my Son!”—Then, on my shoulder thrown,
 Heart-smote, and wan, he heav’d the bitter groan.

Oh! while these arms their honour’d Burden prest,
 As his sunk cheek felt cold upon my breast,
 What words can paint the deep distress I bore,
 What Horror smote me, and what Anguish tore?

And could I see the Author of my birth
 Thus bend in woe the hoary head to Earth;
 Round his weak Frame such whelming anguish rage,
 Nor snatch from the dread storm his failing age,
 Because my Hopes—my Peace—perhaps my Life
 Were doom’d to perish in the filial strife?
 Impossible!—the softer Passions fly,
 Nor dare dissolve great Nature’s primal tie.

“ Be

" Be comforted, my Father!—could thy Son,
 " Oh! could he live to see thee thus undone,
 " Endure the knowledge, that when Fortune gave
 " The power to save thee, he refus'd to save?
 " The torturing self-reproach must rend his brain,
 " And wake to phrenzy the remorseful pain.
 " But O my Love!—yet pardon me!—I go
 " Alone to stem conflicting tides of woe!
 " I go, to teach my Soul her arduous task,
 " And gain by prayer the fortitude I ask!"

So saying, to his couch my Sire I led,
 And smooth'd the pillow for his languid head.
 With softer tears his trembling eye-balls shone,
 And faltering accents ardent blest his Son.

Then up the Mountain's steep, and craggy side,
 With step precipitate, I wildly stride;
 Now stung with tortures of the last despair;
 Now sunk in grief;—now energiz'd by prayer;
 Nor yet in vain th' heart rending efforts prove,
 Warm Duty rises over bleeding Love!

The

The struggle past!—my peace!—my freedom given!
 Thy anchor Hope, on shoreless oceans driven!
 What then to Justice, or to Love remain'd,
 But to restore the heart, my vows had gain'd?
 Wrench from LOUISA's breast its cherish'd bane,
 And nobly the last sacrifice sustain?
 Renounce her pity, and inspire her hate,
 In tenfold gloom, tho' it involve my fate?
 Teach her to think the Villain-baseness mine,
 That bows the venal Heart at Fortune's shrine?
 So might th' indignant sense of barter'd Truth
 Quench the disastrous Passion of her Youth;
 Now doom'd to darken every Hope, that cheers,
 With shining promises, the rising years!
 Had I the dread necessity explain'd,
 That with resistless force my freedom chain'd;
 Tore the sweet bands, by virtuous Passion tied,
 And stamp'd our Constancy with Paricide;
 Then had LOUISA fortified my Soul,
 And urg'd my ling'ring step to Duty's goal;
 Had given me back, with Pity's softest brow,
 Of Love so ruinous, the ill-starr'd vow;

A self-

A self-devoted Exile fled my arms,
 But forrowing fled them, and resign'd her charms
 To fruitless Constancy, and fond Regret;
 Ordain'd to mourn—unable to forget;
 That pine in Solitude the live-long Day,
 Feed on the heart, and steal the life away.

LOUISA's pity had my sufferings found,
 Somewhat it sure had balm'd th' embosom'd wound;
 But since e'en her dear sympathy was weak,
 Of Fate's dread shaft th' envenom'd point to break,
 I strove to avert the slow-consuming pain,
 And for the conflict, arm'd her with disdain;
 That cruel conflict, which the Passions prove,
 E'er high-soul'd Scorn subdues a rooted Love.

Still, to my Being's latest verge, be borne
 The dear, mistaken Maid's unceasing scorn;
 Oh! be they borne in this unhappy breast,
 To the cold bed of its eternal rest!

Near

Near seems that rest my wearied Life desires,
 Pain breaks her springs, and Sicknefs dims her fires,
 And Hope, who comes in fable vest array'd,
 Points, with pale hand, to Death's eternal shade !

But yet,—when past the expiatory doom,
 When Misery's shafts lie broken on my tomb,
 Th' exploring gaze, sweet E M M A, kindly bend
 On the dear bosom of thy beauteous Friend ;
 If thou shalt mark, that cold contempt sustains
 That seat of softness from assaulting Pains ;
 That no dim tears her cheek's warm roses pale,
 No sighs of anguish swell the lonely gale,
 Whose murmurs o'er the grass-green sod shall rise,
 Where, cold, and peaceful, lost E U G E N I O lies,
 Then, that thou name me *not*, my Soul implores,
 Nor snatch the peace away Disdain restores ;
 The cruel change thy tendernefs will fear,
 Of Pride's stern frown, for Pity's heart-wrung tear.
 Oh ! shall one selfish wish her peace invade
 That Love so agoniz'd may sooth my shade ?

No,

No, EMMA, no!—my Soul for her's shall wait,
 Till soft it pass the everlasting Gate;
 From those dear Eyes till Light Divine shall clear,
 The film, that mortal Chance had darken'd there;
 Fond Memory's deep reproach for aye remove,
 And pleading Seraphs reunite our Love!

But Oh! should Pity, with intrusive sway,
 Range her sad Images in dire array,
 And to LOUISA's mental fight disclose
 The bed of Death—the agonizing throes;
 Oh! should she think she sees in struggles rise
 That breath, which wak'd for her the fondest sighs!
 Those Eyes, whose softness shall no more betray,
 Throw their last glances on the final day!—
 In such an hour, should Scorn, and Anger prove
 Weak to dispel the grief-awaken'd Love;
 Sorrowing for him, who could her hopes deceive,
 Should she, in bitterness of Spirit, grieve
 For Guilt, which, unextenuated, rears
 Barriers to last beyond this Vale of tears;
 Then, EMMA, then, the sad events relate,
 That wove the fable texture of our fate.

My dear LOUISA!—pardon him, who strove
 By means, so seeming harsh, to quench thy Love!
 Hard was the task, that kindness to resign,
 Which my torn bosom could demand of thine;
 Esteem, that might have borne eternal date,
 Since placed, by Virtue, past the reach of Fate;
 That blest'd compassion, my sad lot had won,
 A Wretch by Fortune, not by Crimes undone;
 These to renounce!—with my own hand to throw
 In her dark chalice added dregs of woe;
 To pierce my Soul with voluntary pains,
 A Suicide on Comfort's last remains,
 Was hard!—but generous Love the effort made,
 Thy quiet ask'd;—I trembled—and obey'd!

When to that purer World our Souls are borne,
 Where every veil from every breast is torn,
 My willing Spirit, in the Realms above,
 Shall meet the searching Eye of wounded Love;
 To thee LOUISA my past woes impart,
 And hear thy Angel Voice ABSOLVE MY HEART.

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE.

THIRD EPISTLE.

L O U I S A

T O

E M M A,

WRITTEN THE DAY AFTER SHE HAD RECEIV'D FROM HER
EUGENIO'S EXCULPATING LETTER.

APRIL 21st, 1781.

O! Thou soft Hope, that once with lustre gay
Did'st gild the hours of Love's delicious day,
What, tho' no more the lively joy remains,
That traced thy light step o'er these earthly plains,
Yet, piercing now Despair's incumbent shroud,
Soft Hope, thou lookest from yon parting cloud;
And my lov'd E M M A's hand the vision shews,
That smiles my struggling Spirit to repose!
Bright in EUGENIO's vindicated truth,
That vision lights anew my drooping youth;

For, in perspective beauteous, it displays
 A long eternity of blissful days ;
 Of all those sacred joys our Souls shall prove
 " When pleading Seraphs reunite our love."

'Tis true, EUGENIO, thro' Life's thorny way,
 In far divided paths our steps shall stray ;
 It is not given us, when rude blasts assail,
 And pale Misfortune breathes the bitter gale,
 It is not given, to temper, and assuage,
 Each for the other's breast, its cruel rage ;
 Nor mutually to feel the cheering rays,
 When Health, and Joy inspire Summer-days.
 Our little Barks, their flattering Port in view,
 Fate, on Life's billowy surge, afunder threw ;
 Friend of my soul ! we are not doom'd to gain
 The sunny Isle of that tempestuous Main ;
 But O ! thy Virtue, long imagin'd lost,
 Has felt the wreck of no insidious coast !
 The deep and troubled floods, it knew to brave !
 It rises buoyant on the stormy waves !

Vain

Vain are those Storms, by which its course is driven,
 Since sure, tho' distant, is the port of Heaven.

My dear EUGENIO, the dread Voice will prove
 Indulgent to the frail excess of Love,
 Which to such sad extremes would blindly run,
 Lavish of health, and sickening at the Sun ;
 Since, while an unaccusing Conscience threw
 Th' eternal portals open to my view,
 My Spirit sunk, a prey to fond Despair,
 And coldly view'd that Heaven thou could'st not share ;
 Soil'd with its griefs those amaranthine flowers,
 Inwove by Faith in bright Religion's bowers.
 Angel of Mercy ! thou wilt gently breathe
 Exhaling sighs upon that sullied wreath ;
 And the dim stains of my impatient tears,
 Impassion'd yearnings, and desponding fears,
 Shall vanish, as chill dews that Morning throws,
 By Summer Winds are wafted from the Rose !

O ! how o'er-joy'd my dazzled sight survey'd
 These words, in EMMA's characters pourtray'd,

“ He

“ He is not guilty ! ”—rapid from my tongue
 They, in exulting iteration, sprung.
 “ Read, dear LOUISA, and acquit the Heart,
 “ That bears in all thy griefs so large a Part.”

Think’st thou, my EMMA, thy benign command
 Met an unwilling eye, a tardy hand ?
 Heaven ! with what force these hands, these eyes, impell’d,
 Seize the known characters, so long with-held !
 While every letter, e’er examin’d, wears
 Th’ uninjur’d magic of the vanish’d years !
 Disorder’d sounds my lips pronounce, nor spare
 The useless question to th’ unconscious air.
 “ Does that dear hand yet trace LOUISA’s name ?
 “ Will it his Love, his Innocence proclaim ?
 “ How may this be ?—yet EMMA says ’tis so.”
 Then did I read, and weep, and throb, and glow,
 Approve, absolve, admire, and smile, and sigh,
 Till pensive Peace shone mildly in my eye ;
 Back with that lost esteem, my heart deplor’d,
 The Wanderer came, with half her rights restor’d.

So luckless CLAIRMONT's thorny path she smooths ;
 So his sharp sense of many an ill she sooths ;
 One dear recover'd Hope his grief beguiles,
 And, 'midst the wreck of all the rest, he smiles.
 E M M A, thou knew'st him well ;—the jocund Youth,
 Ambition's Votary, yet of taintless truth.
 Lur'd by the wealth the glowing Andes hide,
 He long'd to pass the interposing tide.
 Remembrance sees him on the Sea-beach stand,
 His fair CLARISSA weeping on his hand.
 With anxious smiles her varying cheek he dries,
 And talks of prosperous Winds, and favoring Skies.
 Clear was the Sky, and gentle were the Gales,
 And wide and waving stream'd the snowy Sails ;
 While, tossing the green sea-weed o'er, and o'er,
 Crept the hush'd billow on the shelly shore ;
 Soft as th' autumnal breeze among the sheaves,
 Or gently rustling in the fallen leaves ;
 And rolling in blue Light the watery Way
 With frosted silver seem'd bedropt, and gay.

Impatient

Impatient CLAIRMONT led his pensive Bride,
 As slow she scal'd the Vessel's stately side.
 So smooth the Seas, the tall Bark seem'd to sleep,
 While her gay Pennants ting'd the glassy Deep.
 Day after Day mild Breezes freshen'd round,
 Till Skies alone the mighty Waters bound.

But now, far distant from Britannia's shore,
 Round craggy Steeps where angry billows roar,
 Rise the dark Winds!—and borne on flagging wing,
 On the bent mast the screaming Fulmars cling!
 And soon the fury of the wildest Storm
 That could the vext and swelling Sea deform,
 With Death's shrill voice, shrieks in the rending shrouds,
 As whirls the dizzy Vessel to the clouds;
 Or prone shoots swiftly to the billowy vale,
 While the wet Seaman's altering cheek is pale.

The whirling Ship the guiding Rudder mocks,
 It strikes!—it bursts upon the bulging Rocks!
 Unhappy CLAIRMONT, who had vainly tried
 In the tofs'd Boat to place his beauteous Bride,

Sees,

Sees on the deck, pale, trembling, as she stood,
 The sudden Billow dash her to the Flood;
 While on the riven plank himself 'convey'd,
 With only Life, beneath a stranger Shade,
 Wakes from the briny trance, and wakes to know,
 Of Fate's dark stores, the most accomplish'd Woe!
 Borne by a friendly Sail, that now he stands
 A ruin'd Wanderer on his native Lands,
 Seems little;—Love's feverer tortures reign
 With force despotic, and exclusive pain.

This borne, from month to month, and year to year,
 At length, unlook'd for tidings charm his ear;
 His fair CLARISSA lives!—on coasts unknown
 Wreck'd, like himself, unfriended and alone,
 By destiny severe, an hapless Slave,
 Pines on rude shores beyond th' Atlantic wave;
 Yet, that she *lives* is so unhop'd a joy!—
 Before it Doubt, and Fear, and Anguish fly!
 She lives!—and Fate may aid the ardent strife,
 And to his arms restore his long-lost Wife!

K

In

In that dear hope pale Misery's tortures cease,
And agony subsides almost to peace.

So I—but to EUGENIO swift impart
How full the pardon of LOUISA's heart!
O! let him not repent he wrung her Mind
With fruitless woes, so generously design'd;
Since, tho' they fail'd her freedom to restore,
Had she not long been destin'd to deplore
His Mind, as cruel, venal, false, and vain—
O but for that!—the Soul-distracting pain,
Whose unexpected flight makes other grief
Sink in the softness of that blest relief,
Her Spirit ne'er, as now, had risen above
The poignant woes of disappointed Love;
Of that disunion here, stern Fate commands,
Who throws her edicts with such ruthless hands!
But greater Ills remov'd, the less remain
Shorn of their pointed stings, and lost their bane.
Say, in LOUISA's breast no longer glow
The inward fires of life-consuming Woe;

Distant

Distant alike from Pain's incumbent gloom,
 And sprightly Pleasure's gaily-kindling bloom,
 The vital Powers effuse a softer flame,
 And with serener beams pervade her Frame.
 O bid him live!—live, to fulfil each part
 That makes such awful claims upon his heart;
 And as an Husband, as a Father, prove
 Virtuous, and great, as in his filial love!

I too shall live!—Health's warmer currents break,
 Yet unconfirm'd, upon my faded cheek,
 Last Night their honied dews prolong'd my rest,
 As soft they sprung within my cherish'd breast.
 O Night! the first exempt from wildest throes
 Of fever'd Pain, that chas'd the short repose,
 Since my EUGENIO's seeming coldness strove,
 Alas! how much in vain! to quench my Love.
 Yes, I shall live to expiate by a Mind
 Bow'd to its fate, and cheerfully resign'd,
 The dangerous rashness, which my peace had thrown
 On human chance, and errors not my own.

Here, to my favorite bower, at rising Day,
 With tranquil step, I bent my purpos'd way ;
 For here I first beheld the graceful Youth,
 And here he promis'd everlasting truth ;
 And here to thee, my Friend, I used to grieve,
 When Life could charm no more, nor Hope deceive ;
 And here, my long afflicted Spirit, freed
 From that barb'd shaft, on which it wont to bleed,
 Now bids its soften'd feelings gently flow,
 To her, who draws the deadly sting of Woe.

Once more these eyes, with smiles of pleasure hail
 The vernal beauties of my native Vale ;
 The plenteous dews, that in the early ray
 Gem the light leaf, and tremble on the spray ;
 The fresh cool gales, that undulating pass,
 With shadowy sweep, along the bending grass.—
 Now throw the shrubs and trees the lengthen'd shade
 On the smooth turf distinct!—and now they fade,
 As sinks the Sun, behind a cloud withdrawn,
 That late unveil'd shone yellow on the lawn.

Soft

Soft o'er the Vale, from this my favorite seat,
 Serene I mark the vagrant beauties fleet ;
 In different lights the changing features trace,
 Catch the bright form, and paint the shadowy grace.
 Where the light Ash, and browner Oak extend,
 And high in Air their mingled branches bend,
 The mossy bank, beneath their trembling bowers,
 Arises, fragrant with uncultur'd flowers,
 That stoop the sweet head o'er the latent spring,
 And bear the pendant Bees, that humming cling.
 Just gleams the Fount—for, curving o'er its brink,
 The lengthen'd grass the shining Waters drink ;
 Their green arms half its glassy beauties hide,
 As from beneath them steals the wandering tide,
 And down the Valley careless winds away,
 While in its streams the glancing Sun-beams play.

But where the Greenwood-hill, with arching shade,
 Opes the light Vista up the winding Glade,
 I see a venerable Form descend ;
 His slow steps falter as they hither bend.

Soft

Soft lifts the breeze the locks of silver grey,
 And gentlest meanings his mild looks convey!
 Stranger, whoe'er thou art, thy faded face
 And bending form have many a touching grace.
 He stops!—I hasten to explore the cause
 Of that fix'd gaze!—of that impassion'd pause!

END OF THE THIRD EPISTLE.

NOTE, UPON reading this third Epistle to a Friend, he observed, that perhaps a comparison of LOUISA's own situation with the harder fate of her Lover, and her tender pity for the inevitable miseries of such a union, might have been acceptable in the place of the episode of CLAIRMONT, and the description of the bower; but it should be considered, that LOUISA wrote under the immediate impression of her extacy to find EUGENIO guiltless; that her Mind was not sober'd enough for reflection. To have investigated the unhappy lot of her Lover must have been a melancholy employment. Eased of an oppressive weight of misery, her exhilarated spirits admit not, so early, any painful ideas. She does not discriminate, she felicitates her destiny. Her sympathy in the fate of her Friends grows more lively—she recollects the situation of CLAIRMONT—Joy is naturally loquacious, and she is gratified in relating his story to her EMMA. She awakens with new vivacity to the impressions of pleasure, which her Mind was accustomed to receive from scenic objects. The propensity to dwell on them prevailed even in the hours of her unhappiness. It is an habit which compares and assimilates the smiling, or the gloomy views of Nature to the internal feelings, and is common to people of a lively imagination. In the exultation of her Heart to find her Lover yet estimable, LOUISA speeds to the bower, so impress'd with his image. Its beauties strike her more forcibly than ever, and in this frame of Mind she naturally feels delight in painting them.

FOURTH

FOURTH EPISTLE.

L O U I S A

T O

E M M A,

APRIL 25th, 1781.

O H! my lov'd E M M A, I have much to tell,
Since last I sent thee an abrupt farewell;
But be the chain of those events regain'd,
That led my steps, where awful Horrors reign'd,
And thro' their gloom, the light of Joy reveal'd,
By Fate's eclipsing hand so long conceal'd.

Rising impatient from the mossy seat,
With asking eyes, the stranger Guest I meet;

He

He clasps my hand!—Oh! in that look benign,
 What rays of love, and angel-pity shine!
 Sweet cordial confidence my bosom cheers,
 Yet thrilling start the soft spontaneous tears.

‘ What chance, or generous impulse, may I blefs,
 ‘ Thrice gentle Stranger, for this kind address ;
 ‘ That thus thou vifiteft this lonely Grove,
 ‘ And gazeft on me with paternal love?’

“ Ah! sweet LOUISA,” the mild Form replies,
 His words flow mingling with the rifing fighs,
 “ Behold in me, the fource of all the woes,
 “ That paled on thy fair cheek the early rofe!
 “ But thou art generous, and wilt kindly fhed
 “ Forgiveness on ERNESTO’S aged head;
 “ Yes, thou wilt much allow to sad extremes,
 “ For round thee, as a Light, Compassion beams!”

With pleas’d surprize my beating heart expands ;
 My fwifter tears fall copious on his hands ;

My

My trembling knee involuntary bends,
For deepest reverence with my transport blends.

‘ O Heaven ! art thou that Being, so rever’d,
‘ In happier days to my charm’d Soul endear’d ?
‘ Which oft, unconscious of thy Form, survey’d
‘ Thy worth, by filial tenderness display’d.
‘ All, all is known !—no selfish murmurs rise,
‘ Nor groans arraign the mandate of the skies ;
‘ Nobly EUGENIO their high call obey’d !—
‘ Oh ! what a Wretch were I, should I upbraid,
‘ Because th’ exalted Youth, whose heart I won,
‘ Deserves the blessing, to be born thy Son !
‘ Some vagrant drops may fall, some rebel sighs,
‘ Perchance, to our divided Loves arise ;
‘ But vanish’d now is Misery’s ruthless smart,
‘ Tho’ sad, not wretched, my devoted Heart ;
‘ And oh ! since poor LOUISA thus obtains
‘ Thy generous love, thy soothing pity gains,
‘ On them each fond regret shall sink to rest,
‘ Nor Memory whisper, how she once was blest.’

L

“ Honor’d

“ Honor’d LOUISA! fair angelic Maid,
 “ With every blessing be thy worth repaid!
 “ But Time flies rapidly!—the least delay
 “ Ill suits th’ important message I convey;
 “ An hapless Penitent adjures thee fly,
 “ To pardon, and receive her dying sigh;
 “ O come with me, LOUISA!—at thy gates,
 “ Lo! in the Glen, th’ expecting chariot waits!”

Silent—astonish’d—trembling—faint—and pale,
 My hurried step he hasten’d to the Vale;
 And soon, as seated by his side I rode,
 Thus, from his lip, EMIRA’S story flow’d.

‘ When to the Altar my unhappy Son
 ‘ Led the gay Bride, whom all unsought he won,
 ‘ Pensive his eye, and serious was his air;
 ‘ Tho’, with attentive, and respectful care,
 ‘ He strove to hide the sorrows of his Soul,
 ‘ But could not oft their bursting sigh controul,
 ‘ Bright, and adorn’d, as came the high-born Maid,
 ‘ In every lavish elegance array’d.

‘ Yet

' Yet oft I saw, that inauspicious Morn,
 ' From smother'd consciousness, the transient scorn
 ' Cast lurid flame at times, amid the joy
 ' That glow'd voluptuous in her ardent eye,
 ' When she perceiv'd, no ray of fond desire
 ' Met her warm glance, or authoris'd its fire ;
 ' Saw deep-felt anguish in her Bridegroom prove
 ' The power supreme of violated Love ;
 ' And oft his notice, courteous, yet constrain'd,
 ' Eager she sought ; receiving it, disdain'd ;
 ' And still each day increas'd the vain chagrin,
 ' And waked new fallies of malicious spleen ;
 ' The pensive homage of a wounded Mind,
 ' Tho' grateful, sad, and, without ardor, kind,
 ' Seem'd to reproach those eyes, as powerless grown,
 ' Whose glance, she deem'd, might make the World her own.

' Unjust EMIRA ! that could'st hope to gain
 ' Love's glowing homage from an Heart in pain ;
 ' Thou should'st have sooth'd th' involuntary smart,
 ' And with his friendship satisfied thy heart ;

‘ Thus sweet, and gentle, thou had’st quickly won
 ‘ That grateful tribute from my generous Son ;
 ‘ But well he knew, thy vain ill-govern’d Mind,
 ‘ Nor soft compassion knew, nor love refined ;
 ‘ So unregretful saw thy wasted hours
 ‘ Resign’d to Dissipation’s restless powers ;
 ‘ Yet wish’d those powers a kind relief might prove
 ‘ To the pain’d sense of disappointed Love ;
 ‘ And sometimes hoped, the strong maternal claims
 ‘ Might lead her light desires to softer aims,
 ‘ When a sweet Cherub-Daughter blest her arms,
 ‘ Whose features promis’d all her Mother’s charms ;
 ‘ But no maternal tenderness she shares,
 ‘ The gay EMIRA scorns its gentle cares.

‘ And when to Pleasures, frivolous and vain,
 ‘ He saw succeed, a mad licentious train ;
 ‘ Play, ruinously high, and dark Intrigue
 ‘ Prompt the wild wish, and form the baneful league,
 ‘ How oft has he adjur’d her to reflect,
 ‘ What priceless peace her wild pursuits neglect !

‘ On

‘ On me propitious Heaven the power bestow’d
 ‘ To cancel the vast debt my fortunes ow’d
 ‘ To proud EMIRA,—for my lucky Sails
 ‘ Return’d, rich freighted, from Hispania’s vales;
 ‘ Those Sails, whose venture rash, and long delay,
 ‘ With all a Bankrupt’s misery cross’d my way.
 ‘ Now many a smiling Chance combined to raise,
 ‘ Above the level of my fairest days,
 ‘ That Wealth, whose dreadful and impending fall
 ‘ In one wide ruin had involv’d us all,
 ‘ But that EMIRA, in that fateful hour,
 ‘ Snatch’d my devoted credit from its power;
 ‘ And duteous, noble, dear EUGENIO stood,
 ‘ A youthful Victim to his Father’s good.
 ‘ Yet when I saw, that mean unfeeling Pride
 ‘ Rul’d the vain bosom of the worthless Bride,
 ‘ My Soul rejoic’d, with interest to repay
 ‘ The heavy debt of that disastrous day;
 ‘ For what idea can more painful rise,
 ‘ Than much to owe, where owing we despise?

‘ One

‘ One scene, alas ! my heart can ne’er forget,
 ‘ Nor Memory paint it without keen regret
 ‘ That in the female breast, so form’d to prove
 ‘ The sweet refinements of maternal Love,
 ‘ Disdain, and guilty Pleasure, should controul,
 ‘ And to its yearnings indurate the Soul.

‘ Consummate from her toilette’s anxious task,
 ‘ E M I R A, hastening to the midnight Mask,
 ‘ Th’ Apartment enter’d, where E U G E N I O stood,
 ‘ And near me lean’d, in deeply musing mood.
 ‘ My folding arms their rosy Infant prest
 ‘ To the fond throbbings of a Grandfire’s breast.
 ‘ She, with the tones of petulant reproach,
 ‘ And neck averted, call’d her tardy coach.

‘ I mark’d E U G E N I O’s disapproving sigh,
 ‘ As the licentious vestment caught his eye ;
 ‘ The lofty turban, from whose surface rais’d,
 ‘ Glitter’d the silver plume, the diamond blaz’d ;
 ‘ The snowy veil, in soft disorder thrown,
 ‘ The bosom, rising from the loosen’d zone,

‘ And

‘ And limbs, by golden muslin ill conceal’d,
 ‘ Whose clinging folds their perfect form reveal’d.

‘ With heart-felt pain the injur’d Husband saw
 ‘ The Fair thus scorn Decorum’s guardian law ;
 ‘ Saw all that decent dress, that modest pride,
 ‘ “ Which doubles ev’ry charm it seeks to hide,”
 ‘ Once the bright Dame of Britain’s loveliest boast,
 ‘ In the Seraglio’s wanton Inmate lost !

‘ Seizing her struggling hand EUGENIO tries
 ‘ To warn the fair Devoted, e’er she flies,
 ‘ Where Infamy in silent ambush strays
 ‘ Amidst the antic Throng, the midnight blaze.

“ Oh ! is it thus, he said, a wedded Dame
 “ Lights the loose Profligate’s disgraceful flame ?
 “ If ’gainst an Husband’s claim thy heart is fear’d,
 “ By Heaven establish’d, and by Man revered,
 “ To that, if thy high Spirit scorns to bend,
 “ Yet, O EMIRA ! hear me as thy Friend !

“ Snatch

“ Snatch thy bright youth, and all its countless charms,
 “ From a dread ambush of o’er-whelming harms,
 “ Whose Demon-tribe, some evils shall impart,
 “ To reach and wring the most obdurate heart !
 “ How will that haughty, that aspiring Mind,
 “ Which claims th’ incessant homage of Mankind ;
 “ Sees to those Graces, flattering Crouds avow,
 “ Proud Rank unbend, and rival Beauty bow ;
 “ How will it bear to change this soft respect,
 “ For studied insolence, and rude neglect ?
 “ The nod familiar of the Coxcomb Throng ?
 “ Thy name the theme of their lascivious song ;
 “ And from the high-bred Dames, that now excite,
 “ And share the revels of thy dangerous night,
 “ Who, when Detection’s livid spots arise,
 “ Will studious shun, affecting to despise ;
 “ Canst thou th’ unbending knee’s cold insult bear,
 “ Their smile of malice, and their vacant stare ?
 “ Shafts, which wrong’d Virtue only can sustain,
 “ And rise superior to th’ unjust disdain.”

‘ Thus

‘ Thus while he pour’d, to check this rash career,
 ‘ The startling questions on her wounded ear,
 ‘ Frowning she strove to disengage her hand,
 ‘ And fly the just reproach, the firm demand ;
 ‘ While fullen brows, and flashes of disdain,
 ‘ Too plainly prov’d the awful challenge vain.

‘ Then striving, from a softer cause, to impart
 ‘ The virtuous wish to her misguided heart,
 ‘ A Father’s fondness melting in his look,
 ‘ From my embrace the smiling Babe he took ;
 ‘ Exclaiming, as in all its touching charms
 ‘ He gave it to her half-unwilling arms ;’

“ Alas ! EMIRA, shall this Infant live
 “ To feel the grief that consciousness must give,
 “ When a dishonour’d Mother’s deep disgrace
 “ Pours the pain’d crimson o’er the youthful face ?
 “ Or, lost to Virtue, thy example plead
 “ For the light manners, the licentious deed ?
 “ Forbid it Heaven !—O smile my Child, and lure,
 “ To the maternal transports, soft, and pure,

M

“ That

“ That lovely bosom!—let thy opening bloom
 “ Charm my EMIRA, e’er she yet consume,
 “ In guilty Pleasure’s false and baneful flames,
 “ A Wife’s fair faith—a Mother’s tender claims!
 “ Oh! may she bid thee live to breathe her name
 “ Without the pause of fear, the blush of shame!”

‘ She sigh’d, and clasp’d the Infant to her breast,
 ‘ And milder looks the yielding Heart confess’d;
 ‘ Then, as its eyes to her’s are rais’d the while
 ‘ With all the pathos of th’ unconscious smile,
 ‘ Two crystal drops, that Nature’s influence speak,
 ‘ Steal from her lids, and wander down her cheek;
 ‘ Those stranger tears, by that sweet thrill beguil’d,
 ‘ Fall on the forehead of her beauteous Child.
 ‘ Pleas’d the maternal tribute to survey,
 ‘ EUGENIO kiss’d the lucid drops away.
 ‘ Earnest on him the Fair-One’s moisten’d eyes
 ‘ Turn!—and some rays benign of soft surprise
 ‘ Meet his kind gaze—but ah! the transient dawn
 ‘ Of virtuous feeling, instant is withdrawn;

‘ And

‘ And those mild beams, that Beauty best adorn,
‘ Sink in the clouds of recollected Scorn.

‘ Her arms extending, with imperious air,
‘ The smiling Babe again to my fond care
‘ Coldly she gives ;—and giving it exclaims,
—“ Go little Wretch !—of tender mutual flames
“ Thou wert not born !—then why should I embrace,
“ And live for thee, whose birth is my disgrace ?”

‘ Now to her Husband, with contemptuous smiles,
‘ She bends—and thus his guardian-care reviles.’
—“ LOUISA’S Lover has a right to claim
“ The stern protection of EMIRA’S fame !
“ Whose wealth, whose rank, whose youth, and far-famed
“ So madly given to thy insensate arms, [charms,
“ Are weak to chace the despicable pains,
“ That load thy heart, and ice thy torpid veins ;
“ E’en now my Soul that mean regret espies
“ Pale on thy cheek, and languid in thine eyes !

“ For me, thy needful apprehension spare !
 “ My peace, my fame, abjure EUGENIO’s care !
 “ And in my bosom female Pride shall prove
 “ An happier guard, than my weak, wasted love !
 “ Farewell Insensible !—enjoy thy grief !
 “ Seek in inglorious shades, and sighs, relief
 “ For the *hard* doom relentless Fate ordain’d,
 “ Thy *splendid* fortunes to EMIRA’s chain’d !—
 “ She goes to join, too great of Soul to mourn,
 “ The Circles she was destin’d to adorn,
 “ Till, seizing on her heart with demon-hold,
 “ Passion *insane* that Destiny controul’d !”

‘ And thus the Fair, that one short minute saw
 ‘ Obey the sacred force of Nature’s law ;
 ‘ Now to its dictates more obdurate grown,
 ‘ To Danger’s paths with double zest is flown.

‘ Then to the sameness of the Opera Throng,
 ‘ Where vocal tricks sustain th’ insipid song ;
 ‘ Where, round the Dancer, echoing plaudits sound,
 ‘ At each indecent and distorted bound,

‘ Each

' Each odious gesture that usurps the place
 ' Of easy Elegance and genuine Grace ;
 ' To the pain'd hope, the secret dread presage,
 ' Th' ignoble triumph, and the smother'd rage
 ' Of fatal Play ;—the Ball's fatiguing task,
 ' And the loose revel of the wanton mask ;
 ' To these succeed, th' appointed guilty hour,
 ' That vests the Libertine with boundless power ;
 ' Whose darling hope consists not in the joy
 ' He scarce has wish'd, and that shall instant cloy,
 ' But in the triumph his mean pride has won,
 ' When, public as the Air, and Noon-day Sun,
 ' The dup'd unhappy Fair-One's crimes shall throw
 ' New fancied glories round the Boaster's brow.

' Behold EMIRA, lost to faith, and shame,
 ' Quench the last spark of her long faded fame
 ' For him, whose gay attentions to secure,
 ' Rash Beauty spreads the self-ensnaring lure ;
 ' That haughty Lord, licentious, false, and vain,
 ' Whose groveling heart, nor rank, nor charms obtain ;
 ' A swarthy

‘ A swarthy Opera Dancer triumphs there,
 ‘ And foils th’ attractions of the high-born Fair ;
 ‘ For her he wears the abject, lasting chains ;
 ‘ To her, of Fashion’s drudgery complains,
 ‘ When in feign’d transports veiling cold distaste,
 ‘ With dames of Quality his moments waste ;
 ‘ Waste, to support his consequence, and prove
 ‘ His sway resistless in the realms of Love ;
 ‘ While by her venal arts himself enslaved,
 ‘ Poor from her squandering, by her humors braved,
 ‘ He hugs the Bonds, round which, to grace their power,
 ‘ Nor Youth, nor Beauty twine one blooming flower.

‘ On him EMIRA her unvalued charms,
 ‘ Scarce ask’d, bestows, to wake the wish’d alarms
 ‘ Of Sister-Beauties, and enjoy their pain,
 ‘ Their dangerous spleen, and rivalry insane.

‘ Too well the haughty Dames avenge the smart
 ‘ Her short-liv’d triumph cost their swelling heart,
 ‘ As her false Lover, with abandon’d pride,
 ‘ Reveals the guilt, which Honor bids him hide !

‘ Nor

' Nor tamely had an injur'd Husband borne
 ' Of her connubial faith this lavish scorn,
 ' But that his own remembered coldness brought
 ' Some palliation to his generous thought
 ' For guilty Beauty, in these sensual times,
 ' Where foreign fashions lead to foreign crimes ;
 ' Then, that her wealth, when Fortune's storm arose,
 ' Saved his loved Parents from impending woes !
 ' Oh ! 'twas a thought that would no mark allow
 ' Of just resentment for her broken vow,
 ' Save, that he leaves the violated bed,
 ' Where Peace no gentle poppy e'er had shed,
 ' And studiously each day avoids the Dame,
 ' Who stains his honor with her bleeding fame.

' By Duty urged, by Friendship warned in vain,
 ' As gay EMIRA drives with loosened rein,
 ' Proud Dissipation's wearying labyrinths prove
 ' The bane of Health, as the disgrace of Love.
 ' 'Midst the light Throngs, that croud the garish Mart,
 ' Consuming Fever hurls her fiery dart ;

' Deep

‘ Deep in EMIRA’s breast behold it stand,
 ‘ And Life’s warm current shrink beneath the Brand !

‘ ’Tis now she wakens to the painful sense
 ‘ Of deep contrition for her past offence ;
 ‘ And now, alas ! her dying eyes survey
 ‘ The Form of guilty Pleasure pass away ;
 ‘ Drop the gay mask, and throw the ghastly smile
 ‘ Back on the baffled Victim of her guile.

‘ Hapless EMIRA on her dying bed
 ‘ Shrinks from the Phantom with convulsive dread ;
 ‘ While Conscience rous’d, her former guilt recalls,
 ‘ And with EUGENIO’s wrongs her heart appals.
 ‘ Unfelt till this sad hour, the strong controul
 ‘ Of genuine fondness rushes on her Soul !
 ‘ But with her native violence it reigns,
 ‘ Aids the Disease, and stimulates its pains.
 ‘ Her Husband’s name, in tones of strange affright,
 ‘ Eager she breathes, nor bears him from her sight.
 ‘ In vain her calmness gently he intreats,
 ‘ The generous pardon vainly he repeats ;

‘ For,

' For, starting from her couch, she still demands
 ' Pardon afresh, and wildly wrings his hands.
 ' You too, LOUISA, she invokes, to sign
 ' Her passport blest to Mercy's healing shrine.'
 " O dear ERNESTO," the shrill accents cry,
 " If you have pity, to LOUISA fly;
 " Sweet, injur'd Excellence! would she impart
 " Her pardon to this self-accusing Heart,
 " 'Twould cheer my Spirit, hov'ring on its flight
 " To the dark confines of ETERNAL NIGHT."

' She said—and dear LOUISA will bestow
 ' Th' adjur'd forgiveness on repentant woe;
 ' Will feel its sufferings all her wrongs atone,
 ' And in EMIRA'S pangs forget her own.'

ERNESTO ceas'd—for Pity's throbs oppress'd
 With tender force his venerable breast.
 Thro' the remaining way our mutual sighs,
 From awe-struck thought, in solemn silence rise.

N

Shuddering

Shuddering we now draw near the house of Death,
 And find yet stays the intermitting breath.
 What agitated dread my bosom tears,
 When pausing we ascend the silent stairs!—
 As we approach the slowly opening door!—
 As my pain'd Senses, horror-chill'd, explore
 The dim Apartment, where the less'n'd light
 Gives the pale Sufferer to my fearful sight!
 The matchless grace of that consummate Frame
 Withering beneath the Fever's scorching flame.
 Outstretch'd and wan, with laboring breath she lies,
 Closing in palsied lids her quivering eyes.
 EUGENIO's hand lock'd in her clasping hands,
 As hush'd and mournful by her couch he stands!—
 Horror, and Pity mingled traces flung,
 Which o'er his Form, like wintry shadows, hung;
 Yet, on my entrance in that dreary Room,
 A gleam of Joy darts thro' their awful gloom!
 Oh! what a moment!—my EUGENIO's face!—
 Alas!—how faded its once glowing grace!
 Past hours of woe on his pale cheek I read,
 In eyes whose beams, like waning stars, recede!

Faintly

Faintly the sound of that known voice I hear,
 "Oh my LOUISA!" scarce it meets my ear,
 Left the imperfect slumber should be found
 Chas'd by the check'd involuntary sound.
 But clear the senses of the Dying seem,
 Like the expiring taper's flashing beam.
 Scarce audibly tho' breath'd, LOUISA's name
 EMIRA hears, and her enfeebled Frame,
 With sudden powerless effort, strives to raise;
 But, sinking back, her eyes, in eager gaze,
 Are fix'd on mine,—what anguish in their beams!
 O conscious Guilt! how dreadful thy extremes!
 The chill numb hands, whence deadly dews had broke,
 Snatch'd from her Lord's, when starting she awoke,
 Now, as they seem unable to extend,
 Softly I take, as o'er her couch I bend;
 She turns away, oppress'd by thought severe,
 And sleeps her pillow in the bitter tear.

Alas! be calm! be comforted! I cried,
 "Do you too pardon?"—shrilly she replied,

Bending again on me that burning ray,
Whose heat no contrite waters could allay.

“ Then, dear LOUISA, peaceful shall I die,
“ Since hallow’d thus my last—remorseful sigh ;
“ But Oh ! ’tis dread—when Memory displays
“ The guilt-stain’d retrospect of vanish’d days !
“ The secret—selfish joy—which hail’d the blow,
“ That laid ERNESTO’S prosperous fortunes low ;
“ Sever’d those hands—whose glowing hearts were join’d,
“ The sacred union of the kindred Mind.—
“ Heaven reunites them !—and the Wretch removes,
“ That impious rose between their plighted Loves ;
“ Who not content to blast their sweet increase,
“ And arm—EUGENIO’S Virtue—’gainst his Peace,
“ Added”——But now, from feebleness, or shame,
A deadly faintness sickens thro’ her Frame.
Reviving shortly— “ I would fain,” she cries,
“ E’er everlasting darkness close these eyes,
“ Intreat of that kind Spirit—sweet, and mild,
“ Its future—generous goodness—to my Child.
“ Love her, LOUISA—love her—I implore,
“ When lost EMIRA—wounds thy peace no more !

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! gently foster in her opening Youth,
 “ The seeds of Virtue—Honor—Faith—and Truth,
 “ For thy EUGENIO’s sake !—who gave her birth,
 “ And gave—I trust—the temper of his worth !
 “ And when—on his lov’d knees—my Infant climbs,
 “ Adjure him—to forget her Mother’s crimes !
 “ I know thou wilt !—I feel thy heart expand,
 “ In the dear pressure—of that gentle hand.
 “ O ye wrong’d pair ! in the last awful Morn,
 “ When my stain’d Soul at the eternal Bourn
 “ Shall trembling stand—her final doom to hear,
 “ She less shall dread—to meet the injur’d there !
 “ Congenial Mercy—she may hope to prove,
 “ From the offended Powers—of Truth—and Love !”

While yet these interrupted accents hung,
 Faint on the rigid lip, and faltering tongue,
 The stiffening spasm, the suffocating breath,
 Gave dread presage of near approaching Death.—
 Now roll the eyes in fierce and restless gaze !
 Now on their wildness steals the ghastly glaze !

Till

Till o'er her Form the shadowy horrors spread
The dim suffusion that involves the DEAD.

Thus Wealth, and Rank, and all their gorgeous Train,
The Proud that madden, and ensnare the Vain ;
Youth's frolic grace, and Beauty's radiant bloom,
Sink, in the dreary silence of the Tomb ;
But oh ! rejoice with me, that Hope's blest beam
Threw o'er the dark Abyss one trembling gleam !

For thy LOUISA—Words can ill impart
How dear the comforts eddying round her heart !
How soft the Joy, by Sorrow's shading hand
Touch'd into charms more exquisitely bland !
Or paint EUGENIO's transports as they rise,
More sweet for generous Pity's mingled sighs ;
Sweet above all, from the exulting pride
Of self-approving Virtue, strongly tried.
Applauding CONSCIENCE, yes ! to thee 'tis given,
To inspire a Joy, that antedates our Heaven !

Thus,

Thus, on Moriah's consecrated height,
 Flow'd the obedient Patriarch's fond delight,
 When o'er the filial breast, his faith to seal,
 On high had gleam'd the sacrificing Steel;
 Thus flow'd, when at the Voice, divinely mild,
 His raptured hands unbound his only Child!

O come, my EMMA!—yet thou ne'er hast seen
 Embodied Virtue in EUGENIO's Mein;
 Grace, grandeur, truth, and tendernefs combin'd,
 The liberal effluence of the polish'd Mind!
 And for more generous pleasures than we prove,
 The blifs surveying of the Friends we love,
 Sure we must wait, till Angels shall impart
 Their own perfection to th' expanded Heart!

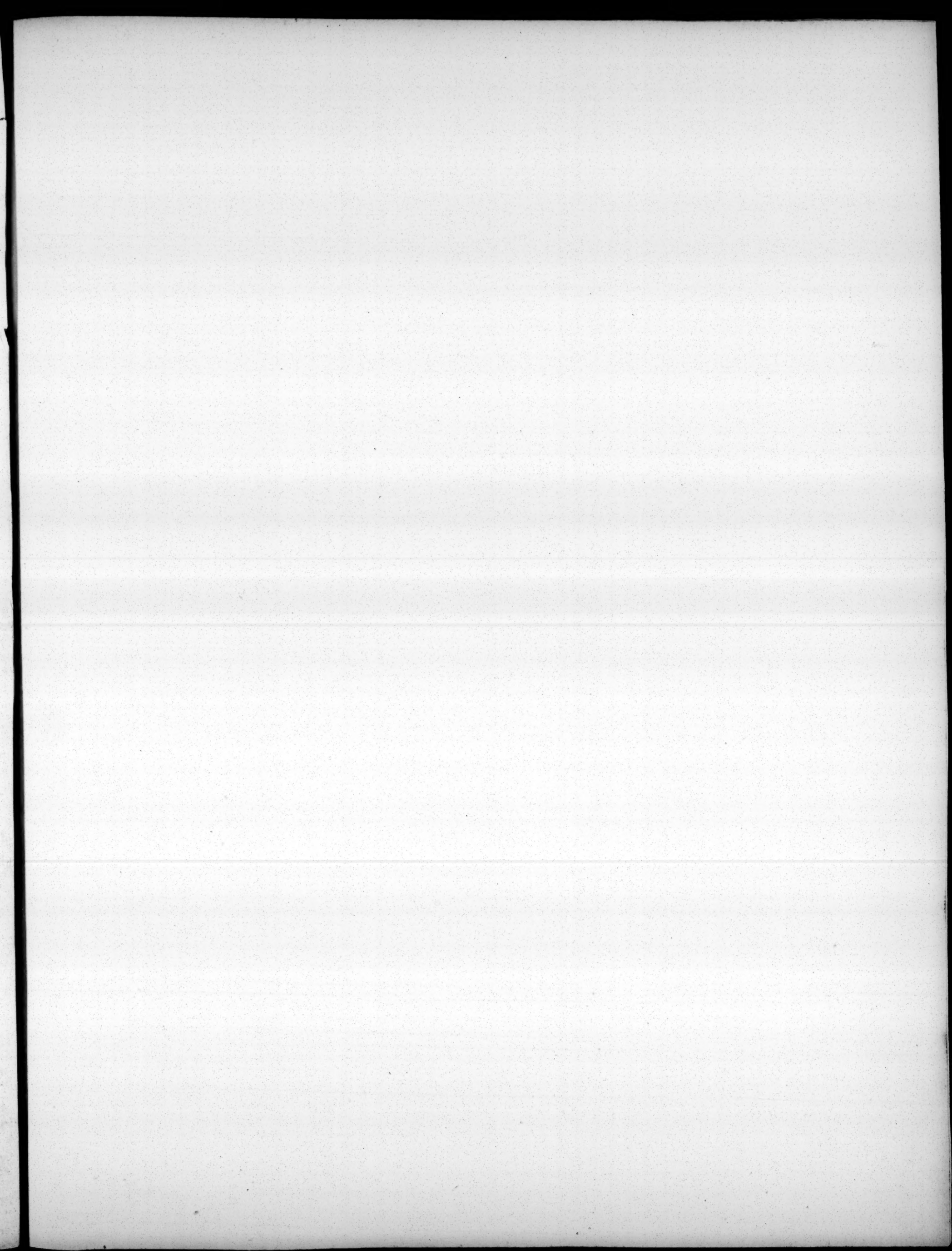
Haste then to share our blessings, as they glow
 Thro' the receding shades of heaviest woe!—
 As Spring's fair Morn, with calm, and dewy light,
 Breaks thro' the weary, long, and stormy Night,
 So now, as thro' the Vale of Life we stray,
 The STAR of JOY relumes, and leads us on our way!

F I N I S.

Anna Seward

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